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LINGUISTICS.—*The word for seal (Pinnipedia) in various languages.*¹ JOHN P. HARRINGTON, Bureau of American Ethnology.

The main industry of the Pribilof Islands, situated in the southern part of the Bering Sea, concerns itself with the fur seal (*Callorhinus ursinus cynocephalus*). It is there that the fur seal breeds, under the protection of the United States Government's Fish and Wildlife Service, and that the harvested skins are partially prepared for making into coats or the like. It was while making a study of the Aleutian language on the island of St. Paul, the larger one of the two main Pribilof Islands, that I noticed that although Aleutian has several words for various aspects of the fur seal, these words are all age-sex descriptions or are derived from Russian—with one sole exception, lakúḍax, the name of the fur seal itself. These facts allow of only one interpretation, which is that originally there was in Aleutian only one word for fur seal, and that all the other words are modificatory terms that have grown up with the development of the industry.

The name for seal most widely spread in languages means sea-dog, sea-wolf, sea-calf, sea-cat, or sea-bear, or some one of these designations with the combining form sea-omitted, this terminology being part of a gigantic extension of terms denoting land animals into the realm of ocean. The seal is bewhiskered and sly and therefore lends itself to these appellations. Some other languages have a special word for seal, or words for two or more species of seal, words which are different from anything else.

Although especially sea-calf is largely used in English dialects, the standard high English word for the animal is "seal," pronounced siil, these terms having been applied in early times notably by *Phoca vitu-*

lina, common seal, the species most usual off the shores of the islands of Britain and Ireland. The curious feature of the word "seal" is that it still appears in certain of its forms in Anglo-Saxon (alias Old English) with a final h, which is a remnant of an erst-while syllable -kos. Several Sanskrit names of animals end in -kas, or this ending alternates with its lack. The declension in Anglo-Saxon of the word for seal is:

	<i>Sing.</i>	<i>Bpl.</i>
NOM.	seolh	sēalās
GEN.	sēoles	sēala
DAT.	sēole	sēalum
ACC.	seolh	sēalas

The h even in Anglo-Saxon disappeared except where it is etymofinal. The vowel-breaking of this word in Anglo-Saxon comes not from an ancient diphthong, but from the vowel e being before, or having been before, lh, while vowel harmony makes the breaking vary between ēo and ēā. Modern Swedish has a survival of this breaking in its secondary form of sāl, seal, which is själ. (See below.) Scotch and Irish dialects of English overdo the h into x the standard spelling having sealch, seal, the pronunciation being selx, while the Shetland Island dialect of English has in standard orthography sealkie, pronounced sēlki. The word for seal in English prior to the recording of English, that is, prior to all vowel breaking, was *selh, with which one can nicely compare Old High German sēlah, seal, with an a which has crept in between the l and the h. The Indo-European form of the word would have been *selkos, the Gothic form would have been *silhs. Old Icelandic selr has already lost its h and goes back to *selhr. As combining form Old Icelandic has the very primitive form sel-, oc-

¹ Received January 22, 1947.

curring for instance in sel-skin, sealskin. What sel- is still further to be connected with, if with anything, nobody knows; connection with soul, which in the Gothic form of the word is *saiwala*, is plausible.

The German language has as its probably commonest word for seal: *Seehund*, falsely taken to have the etymology sea-dog, but Danish *selhund*, seal, shows that this German word may have seal sticking in it as its first half. The other common German word for seal is *Robbe*, feminine, of Low German origin, naturally since Low German is the more maritime and original variety, and without any linking or etymology that is certain.

The Danish-Norwegian word for seal is *sel* or *sælhund*. One should notice that the vowels of the first word and of the first syllable of the second word differ in speaking and pronunciation. The regular Swedish word for seal is *säl*, but the dictionaries carry a much less used byform, *själ*, pronounced *šäl* and sounding exactly the same as *själ*, soul, only *själ*, seal, is masculine and *själ*, soul, is feminine. This secondary word for seal in Swedish is interesting in that it still preserves the olden vowel-breaking that is preserved in English orthography, as has been stated above. A third Swedish term for seal is *sälhund*, literally seal-dog. But **själhund* is never formed for seal; it would be taken to mean soul-dog. There is still another word for seal both in Danish-Norwegian and in Swedish. It is *kobbe*, which reminds one in its sounding, except for the first letter, of German *Robbe*, seal. This word, *kobbe*, appears in Old Icelandic as *kobbi*, seal.

Old Icelandic has *selr*, seal, also *kobbi*, seal, which has just been mentioned. Old Icelandic has also *kópr*, young seal, which is the same word as English *cub*, applied in English to a young bear.

The Irish Celtic language has *rón*, seal. A Scotch Gaelic dictionary gives the same word merely with the different spelling *ròn*. The Welsh language has as its most standard word for seal: *morlo*. This word patently says sea-calf. The common Welsh word for sea is *môr*, whereas *llo*, pronounced *Lo*, is the ordinary Welsh word for calf. One can also, but rarely does, in Welsh say *llo môr* for seal.

The word for seal in Old as well as in Modern Greek, and doubtless in early times applied especially to *Monachus monachus*, which is the species common to Greek waters and to the Mediterranean in general, was, and is, *phóokee*, feminine, connected with Old Greek *phúusa*, a pair of bellows, *phuusaóo*, I blow, I puff, doubtless because the seal had as one of its characteristics that of being a blower. *Phóokee* is one of the Indo-European animal names in -kos; like Latin *vetula* it appears regularly in the feminine, oo ablautes with uu.

Latin had as its own native word for seal, *vitula*, which is nothing but the feminine of the ordinary Latin word for calf: *vitulus*. Slavic and Sanskrit suggest that Latin *vitulus* in origin means little-yearling, connected with Latin *vetus*, old, having years. The Albanian language calls calf *vjete*, which reminds one of the Latin word. The Greek word for seal, *phóokee*, was early taken into Latin as *phoca*, a spelling *phoce* also occurring, and one can still say in Spanish *foca*, as well as to call a seal a sea-wolf.

Lithuanian and the related Lettish language have as the word for seal: *ronis*, reminiscent of the Irish word given above, though exact equivalence is difficult to show. German *Robbe*, seal, starts off the same way.

The Russian language has four words meaning seal. Two of these four terms are, or are derived from, the word for cat. The most distinctive word for seal, which comes quickest perhaps to a Russian's mind, is *tʹulénʹ*, which refers perhaps especially to hair seal, but is also the word for seal in general. A word *nérpa*, meaning especially hair seal, and unknown to many Russians, is of Karelian origin and has in origin been picked up from Finnish *norppa*, marble-seal. Russian *morskóy kót*, sea-cat, is largely used for the seal, or one says *kot*, with *morskóy* understood. *Kot* in terrestrial application signifies a tom-cat. The corresponding feminine is of course *morskáya kótcka*, or merely *kótcka*. The fourth term is *kótik*, in origin a diminutive of *kót*. *Kótik* has become standardized to be the regular name of the fur seal. The first and third of the Russian words given above also

have usage with metaphorical meaning: *tʷulénʷ* means a clumsy person, *kót* a bully.

The regular Finnish word for seal is *hyle*. *Norppa*, marble-seal, is not to be found at all in one Finnish dictionary.

BOTANY.—*The Amazonian varieties of Lonchocarpus nicou, a rotenone-yielding plant.*¹ FREDERICK J. HERMANN, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Exploration of the *llanos* and *selvas* of eastern Colombia in 1944 for additional sources of rotenone-yielding plants disclosed the frequent occurrence there of two *barbascos* of economic value. One of these was *Lonchocarpus urucu* Killip & Smith, until then definitely known only from Amazonian Brazil and a single locality in Colombia² but suspected to extend into Peru and Venezuela. The second and commoner of the two *barbascos* (which, as is so generally the case, were found only in sterile condition) was thought to be either *L. utilis* A. C. Smith or *L. chrysophyllus* Kleinh., until firsthand acquaintance with *L. utilis* at Iquitos revealed discrepancies from the Colombian plant and subsequent study of authentic material of *L. chrysophyllus* in the herbarium showed that reference of the Colombian collections to this concept was equally unsatisfactory. They appear, however, to be a very good match for specimens annotated by Krukoff and Smith as their "*Lonchocarpus* sp. No. 10" (*Amer. Journ. Bot.* 24: 584. 1937), said to occur "in the region of the Amazon delta and also in Surinam and British Guiana."

Intergradations in morphological characters among all these plants were found to be so frequent in Colombia that great difficulty was often experienced in arriving at a satisfactory disposition of a given collection; indeed, intermediates between *L. urucu* and "Krukoff & Smith No. 10" seemed to be the rule rather than the exception. For this reason it seems better to treat them as geographic varieties of the polymorphic *L. nicou* (Aubl.) DC. rather than to continue the attempt to maintain them as specific entities. The following new

variety and new combinations are therefore proposed. Because the plants have been so little known in Colombia, collections of the two varieties found in that country by the writer are cited. Abbreviations employed for the herbaria containing these specimens are: C (Instituto de Ciencias Naturales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá); NA (U. S. National Arboretum Herbarium, Beltsville, Md.), and US (U. S. National Herbarium, Washington, D. C.). All localities are in Colombia.

Lonchocarpus nicou (Aubl.) DC., var. **lan-guidus**, var. nov. (*Lonchocarpus* No. 10, Krukoff & Smith, l.c.).—A varietate typica recedit foliolis papyraceis longioribus (16–32 cm) longe acuminatis, sensim in apicem gracilem (2–4 cm) productis, nervibus secundariis arcuatim adscendentibus.

The large papyraceous leaflets with very long tips (averaging 3.5 cm) are characteristic of this variety.

INTENDENCIA DEL VICHADA: Deep forest (Monte Arrojo) on llanos along the Río Vichada, 7 km northeast of San José de Ocuñé, 10982 (C; US); same, 27 km northeast of San José de Ocuñé, 11005 (C;NA;US) (approaching var. *urucu*). **INTENDENCIA DEL META:** Bank of small stream in dense forest (Monte de Machadero, Ocoa), 4 km southeast of Villavencio, 11123 (C;NA—TYPE;US); same, 11128 (US); dense forest (Restrepo Woods), 6 km north of Villavencio, 11150 (US); dense forest (Ladorada Marayal de San Martín), 16 km northwest of San Martín, 11177 (C;US) (approaching var. *urucu*); forest near the Río Meta, $\frac{1}{4}$ km east of Puerto López, 11209 (C;US) (approaching var. *urucu*). **COMISARIA DEL CAQUETA:** Forest near mouth of Quebrada Las Dalías on the Río Ortegaza, La María (Hacienda de Ramón Achiardy), 23 km southeast of Venecia, 11225 (C;US) (approaching var. *typicus*); same, 11228 (C;US) (approach-

¹ Received January 3, 1947.

² El Porvenir, on the Río Meta, according to G. Gutierrez (*Estudio sobre los principales barbascos colombianos*, Supl. Revista Agr. y Ganad., 1943: 22)